



TOYOTA IN WEST VIRGINIA: A CHRONOLOGY

Rockefeller's Vision Becomes a Reality

January 1986

Japan

Senator Jay Rockefeller travels to Toyohashi Japan, tours the Tahara Toyota plant and meets with company officials. Rockefeller is formally introduced to Dr. Shoichiro Toyoda, Chairman of Toyota Motor Corporation.

April 1987

Japan

Rockefeller meets with senior members of the Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organization) and lays out the economic advantages of doing business in West Virginia. Rockefeller contacts Dr. Toyoda and asks the Toyota Motor Corporation to send a representative to West Virginia to take a first-hand look at the state as a potential investment site.

October 1987

West Virginia

Rockefeller and members of the West Virginia Round Table welcome members of the Keidanren Investment Mission to the Mountain State. Mr. Kouichi Watanabe, then-Senior Vice President of Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A., is a member of the mission.

April 1988

Japan

Rockefeller outlines investment opportunities for members of the Chukeiren (business leaders from the Chubu region of Japan -- home of NGK and Toyota) and invites them to visit West Virginia. Again, the Senator visits Dr. Toyoda and asks him to send a senior member of the company to West Virginia.

July 1988

West Virginia

Rockefeller hosts a visit by the Chukeiren to explore business opportunities in West Virginia. Dr. Toyoda sends three senior members of his staff to join Senator Rockefeller's newly formed Discover the REAL West Virginia economic development initiative.

December 1988

Washington

Rockefeller hosts a dinner at his Washington home for newly-elected Governor Gaston Caperton and Dr. Toyoda, leading a wide-ranging conversation about West Virginia and investment opportunities in the state.

January 1989

Japan

Rockefeller meets with Dr. Toyoda and his brother, Mr. Tatsuro Toyoda, President of Toyota Motor Corporation. Rockefeller and the Toyodas spend the morning discussing the advantages of West Virginia as a site of future Toyota investment.

December 1989

Japan

During speeches he delivers at investment seminars in Tokyo and Nagoya, Rockefeller introduces Governor Caperton to the Chukeiren and the Keidanren.

January 1991

Japan

Rockefeller and Dr. Toyoda meet for a private dinner in Tokyo. Their discussions include the possibility of Toyota Motor Corporation doing business in West Virginia.

January 1994

Japan

Dr. Toyoda and the Toyota Motor Corporation host a dinner in honor of Rockefeller in Tokyo.

January 1995

Japan

Rockefeller leads a delegation of 33 West Virginia business leaders on an unprecedented nine-day trade and investment mission to Japan and Taiwan. The Project Harvest mission builds upon recent international investment successes by West Virginia in attracting NGK Sparkplug, Shinsei Tool, and others. On this mission, Rockefeller meets again with Dr. Toyoda.

July 1995

West Virginia

Mr. Toshiaki "Tag" Taguchi, member of the Toyota Motor Corporation's Board of Directors, joins more than 10 Japanese companies as they travel to West Virginia for a five-day trade and investment mission to tour plants, meet with company representatives, and discuss investment and trade opportunities with West Virginia businesses. This reverse-trade mission is dubbed Project Harvest, U.S.A.

August 1995

Toyota announces its plans to build a truck manufacturing facility in North America. Rockefeller immediately contacts Dr. Toyoda, asking him to consider West Virginia as a possible site for the plant.

September 1995

Rockefeller learns that Toyota quietly sent a team into West Virginia to look at the state. Rockefeller writes to Dr. Toyoda to tell Toyota that state officials and he have identified seven West Virginia sites that may meet Toyota's needs. Rockefeller then requests a meeting with Dr. Toyoda and Governor Caperton.

October 1995

Washington

Rockefeller, Caperton, and members of the State Development office hold high-level meetings with Dr. Toyoda and other top Toyota officials at Rockefeller's Washington home. Rockefeller and the other West Virginia officials make a direct pitch for West Virginia as a site for any future Toyota development.

October 1995

West Virginia

Dr. Toyoda dispatches a site selection team to visit West Virginia to look at sites again.

December 1995

Washington

Rockefeller meets again with Toyota officials. At this meeting, Toyota officials inform Rockefeller that they have chosen Indiana as the site for the new truck plant. They also discuss plans to build an engine plant and said they are considering West Virginia as a site.

January 1996

West Virginia

Seven Toyota representatives return to West Virginia to review four possible sites for the engine plant.

February 1996

West Virginia

Rockefeller and Caperton meet with members of the Toyota Site Selection Team to review West Virginia sites.

March 1996

Mr. Toshimi Onishi, then-Executive Vice President of Toyota Motor Corporation, informs Rockefeller and Caperton that the Buffalo site, in Putnam County, has been selected as the site for the engine plant.

May 1996

Charleston

Senator and Mrs. Rockefeller host a private dinner for Dr. Shoichiro Toyoda, Chairman of Toyota Motor Corporation, and his wife, Hiroko. They celebrate their friendship and the news of the selection of the Buffalo site.

May 9, 1996

Charleston

Rockefeller, Caperton, and then-Toyota Motor Corporation President Hiroshi Okuda, and officials of the State Development Office hold a press conference at the West Virginia Culture Center announcing that Toyota has chosen Buffalo, West Virginia, as the site to build their new \$400 million engine plant.

September 1996

Buffalo, WV

Toyota breaks ground in Buffalo, West Virginia on a \$400 million plant to produce 4-cylinder Corolla engines with a projected initial workforce of 350.

January 1997

Japan

Senator Rockefeller leads a delegation of twenty-four business leaders from West Virginia to Japan on the second Project Harvest Mission. The delegation meets with Toyota while in Japan.

January 1998

Japan

Senator Rockefeller returns to Japan. He visits Toyota Motor Corporation for a briefing and a test drive of Toyota's new hybrid vehicle. He later meets privately with Dr. Shoichiro Toyoda, Chairman, Toyota Motor Corporation, and Mr. Hiroshi Okuda, then President of Toyota Motor Corporation.

January 1998

Buffalo, WV

Toyota announces that it will build a second factory at the plant to produce V-6 Camry engines, doubling the engine production and increasing Toyota's investment in West Virginia to \$700 million. The original plant was still under construction.

September 1998

Buffalo, WV

Toyota announces another expansion of the Buffalo facility to make automatic transmissions for the Camry. This \$200 million expansion creates another 200 jobs at the facility and establishes Toyota's first automatic transmission plant outside of Japan.

December 1998

Buffalo, WV

Toyota celebrates production of the first 4-cylinder engine at the facility.

January 1999

Japan

Senator Rockefeller returns to Japan with a delegation from West Virginia to meet with Toyota and other suppliers touting West Virginia as a wonderful place to do business. Senator Rockefeller flies back and forth between Japan and Washington, D.C. several times during the two week trip in order to be present for Senate votes surrounding the impeachment hearings of President Bill Clinton.

January 2001

Buffalo, WV

Toyota announces its third expansion in West Virginia with the company's decision to build engines and transmissions for the Lexus RX 300 sports utility vehicle, as well as expand capacity of the 4-cylinder line adding production of the Toyota Matrix and the Pontiac Vibe at the Buffalo facility. This \$50 million investment creates 200 more jobs and makes Buffalo the first plant outside Japan to make engines for the prestigious Lexus line. Bringing Lexus power train production to West Virginia signals the confidence Toyota has in the team members at the Buffalo facility. This decision has enhanced the plant's status both within and outside the company.

July 2001

Japan

Senator Rockefeller leads another delegation of business leaders from West Virginia to Japan on yet another Project Harvest mission. While in Japan, Senator Rockefeller meets with high ranking officials from Toyota Motor Manufacturing including Mr. Fujio Cho, then President of Toyota Motor Manufacturing. He also has his first meeting with Hino Motors (a Toyota subsidiary now located in Williamstown, West Virginia). As a result of this mission, Senator Rockefeller and Governor Wise agree to host several Toyota suppliers in West Virginia in 2002.

2002-2005

The prestigious Harbor Report North America names Toyota's Buffalo plant as the Number 1 four-cylinder engine manufacturing plant in North America. The plant goes on to win seven Harbour awards over four years.

2003

Toyota is now producing engines for five North American vehicles: the Corolla, Matrix, Sienna, RX 300, and Pontiac Vibe.

April 2004

Buffalo, WV

Toyota announces its fourth expansion to make gears for the Lexus automatic transmission, adding 50 new jobs and another \$80 million in investment.

April 2005

Buffalo, WV

Toyota announces a \$120 million expansion of its engine and transmission plant which will add an additional 150 employees.

June 2005

Japan

Senator Rockefeller and Governor Manchin visit Toyota City to introduce Manchin to Dr. Toyoda. Rockefeller and Manchin review Toyota's next-generation hybrid models. Rockefeller and Manchin also visit the World Exposition in Aichi, which is sponsored by Toyota and represents Dr. Toyoda's long-time dream.

May 2006

Toyota's Buffalo plant celebrates their 10-year anniversary in West Virginia.

July 2009

Buffalo, WV

Toyota announces the facility will start producing engines for the company's Highlander sport-utility vehicle.

October 2009

Buffalo, WV

Toyota announces the facility will start producing Rav4 engines.

March 2010

Buffalo, WV

Toyota opens its on-site health care center offering health care services to team members, retirees, and their dependents.

February 25, 2011

Buffalo, WV

Rockefeller and Toyota announce that Toyota will invest even more in the Buffalo facility creating 40 new jobs. They announce that the facility will start producing additional 6-speed automatic transmissions.

October 2011

Buffalo, WV

Toyota celebrates their 15-year anniversary in West Virginia.

March 1, 2012

Buffalo, WV

Rockefeller and Toyota announce that Toyota will invest \$45 million more in the Buffalo facility creating 80 new jobs. This will bring the total number of employees at the facility to almost 1,200 people. The facility will expand its production of 6-speed automatic transmissions.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Toyota will employ almost 1,200 people, after the 80 new employees are hired, and has invested more than \$1.2 billion in West Virginia, making it the largest industrial investment in the state in the last 50 years.
- The plant now generates products for the Corolla, Matrix, Sienna, Rav4, Highlander, Lexus RX 350, Avalon, Camry, and Venza.
- Japanese companies in West Virginia supplying Toyota include Diamond Electric, Nippon Thermostat, Green Metals, Okuno International, Toyota Tsusho, ARK, ROWV, Okaya, NGK, and Meiji Corporation.